THE BARONY OF DRAGONSSPINE

Meiassis Dragon

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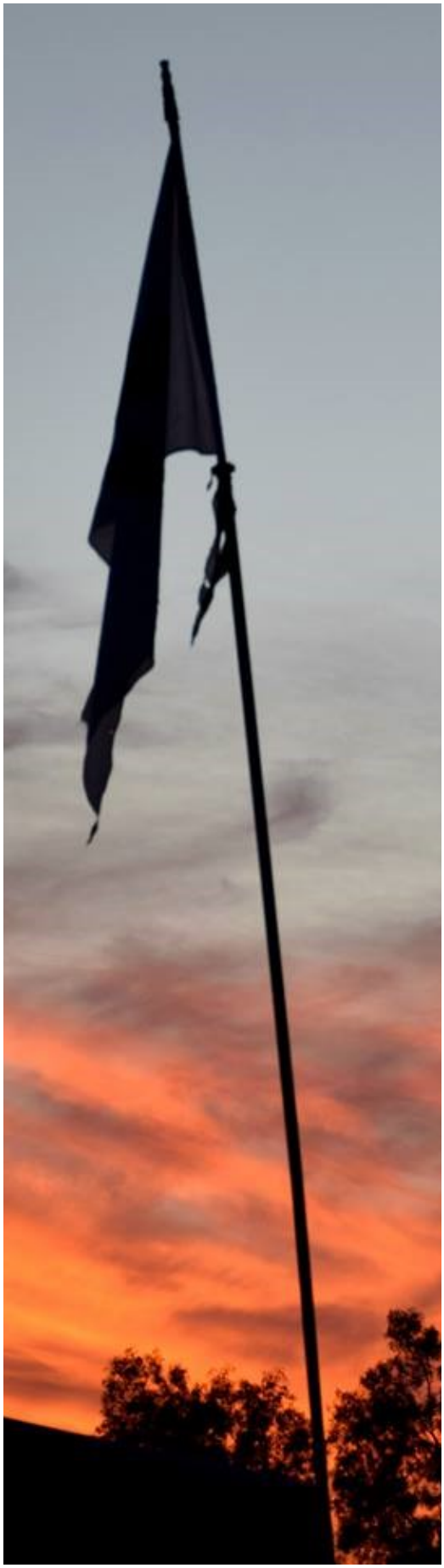

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I sent my soul into the invisible

I sent my soul into the invisible,
Some letter of that after life to spell.
And by and by my soul returned to me
And answered, I myself am heaven and hell.

Omar Khayyam (Rubaiyat)

Omar Khayyam (18 May 1048 – 4 December 1131) was Persian polymath: philosopher, mathematician, astronomer and poet. He also wrote treatises on mechanics, geography, mineralogy, music, and Islamic theology. He is best known for his epic work of poetry. – the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*

Omar Khayyam's full name was Ghiyath al-Din Abu'l-Fath Umar ibn Ibrahim Al-Nisaburi al-Khayyami. A literal translation of the name al-Khayyami (or al-Khayyam) means tent man and this may have been the trade of Ibrahim his father. Khayyam played on the meaning of his own name when he wrote:-

Khayyam, who stitched the tents of science,
Has fallen in grief's furnace and been suddenly burned,
The shears of Fate have cut the tent ropes of his life,
And the broker of Hope has sold him for nothing!

Upcoming Events

October 2015		
2-4	Fontaine dans Sable	Warders of the Western Gate
3	Villaleon	Corazon de Leon IV
7-12	Caid	Great Western War
10	al-Barran	StagsCon
16-18	Blackwater Keep	Blackwater Keep Demo & Faire
17	Aarquelle	Aarquelle Defender 30
24	Unser Hafen	Newcomers Event
24	Citadel of the Southern Pass	Feast of Saint Edrik
November 2015		
7	al-Barran	Day of A&S
7	Dragonsspine	Dragonsspine Baronial Arts & Sciences
7	Bofharrach	Brewers Feast
14	Fontaine dans Sable	Coronation
14	Middle	Known World Academy of the Rapier / Known World Co
15	Fontaine dans Sable	Fontaine Toy Box
December 2015		
5	Windkeep	Hunters Feast
5	Dragonsspine	Gypsy Christmas
12	Caer Galen	Caer Galen Midwinter
19-20	al-Barran	Midwinter and War Practice
January 2016		
2	Caerthe	Caerthen 12th Night
9	Citadel of the Southern Pass	12th Night and War Practice
16	Aarquelle	Viking Vinter Vonderlandt
16	Fontaine dans Sable	12th Night
23	Plattefordham	Candlemas
30	Dragonsspine	Candlemas
February 2016		
6	Caerthe	Tri-Baronial A&S

Business Meeting Minutes

StagsCon: Please register if you are attending. There will be a free breakfast and lunch so they can get a good head count. If you are an officer and cannot go, please contact your Kingdom officer.

Baronial A&S: Please let Lydia know if you are going to be attending. There are currently 5 entries for champion. There is a research and a display portion of the day. Please talk to Lydia with any questions.

Gypsy Christmas:

At American Legion Hall. December 5. No outside alcohol. If you have any items for the auction please see Madame Adelaisa.

Baron: Gold key has been passed on to Eulasaid. If you need gold key, or have gold key to return, please see Eulasaid.

Seneschal: If you need me, please contact me at giannisanger-mano@yahoo.com. Please do not use Facebook for official communication. I hardly check it. We will address social media policy next month. If you would like to hold a small event or tourney that is acceptable. Feel free to coordinate using the dates we currently have as well. Especially if these events do not become official (i.e. on the Kingdom calendar) events. These should still be on the Baronial calendar and you should contact the seneschal to avoid conflicts. His Majesty has put into Kingdom Law that any past landed B&B will be referred to as "Your Honor." as a term of respect. Past landed B&B from Outlands will also receive an Augmentation of Arms that is yet to be decided upon.

Exchequer: We have money. Donations are down so please feed the box. Our bank account balance will be dropping unless donations increase. It was suggested that we mention during fighter practice a suggested donation. There will be some discussion on moving dance practice because if dance practice is cancelled we are still paying for the site.

Quartermaster: The shed repairs are proceeding under Sir Lothar's guidance.

Arts and Sciences: We have A&S coming up.

Knight Marshal: We have moved back inside for fighter practice. We had a lot of people attend. Food and drink cannot be on the stage in any quantity. Please wear shoes that do not scuff the floor, heavy don't go to your knees unless you are wearing plastic. Please control children and keep them off the fighting floor. Children are not to be unaccompanied in the hallways. Please keep in mind we can use the parking lot for practice as well if you want the space.

Rapier Marshal: Everything is moving forward. We are hosting a tourney once a month.

Archery: All is good.

Minster of the Lists: Nothing to report.

Herald: We are inputting 3 devices/names this month on April 30.

Chronicler: The next issue will be out shortly. The theme for the issue is "Period thought." The November issue will be on the subject of Rapier. Articles from people we know will be written by Don Antoine and Sir Michalengo. If you have anything you would like to contribute please talk to Madame Adelaisa.

Website: We are still working on the website. We are working on a permanent solution. Please continue to use alternate emails instead of the dragonsspine.org email until we clear the line.

Old Business: The form for UCCS has been resubmitted, and we are likely to be approved as an official group.

New business: Duchess Selene is putting a bid in for May Day.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Recorded by Madame Adelaisa Bernois

Event Announcements

Unser Hafen Newcomers

October 24th 2015

Fees:
Adults (ages 14+)
Site: $5.00 Feast: $10.00 **
Youth (ages 7-13)
Site: $2.50 Feast: $5.00
Family cap (Site Fee only)
$15.00
Children 6 and under in age can attend and eat for no cost

A Non-Member Surcharge of $5.00 will apply

Welcome all who would come to experience what the SCA has to offer. Fighting and feasting. Revelry and artistry. If you are not a newcomer, come to share your passion and pass on a love of the SCA to a new generation!

Site opens at 11am and closes at 8pm

General Event Questions: Lady Safiyya (Joshi Freville) safiyya_sca@yahoo.com

Location: Letford Elementary School - 2 Jay Ave, Johnstown, CO 80534

Directions: Take I-25 to exit 252 for CO-60 east towards Johnstown/Milliken. Turn left onto S Idaho Ave. Turn left onto S Jay Ave. Turn right at the first cross street to stay on S Jay Ave and the school will be on the left.

Site Restrictions:
This is a DRY SITE

The site owners restrict smoking of any kind on their property. Parking is limited! The Event coordinators will organize a loading/unloading area close to the entrance, but please be prepared to carpool and park on the surrounding public streets.

PLEASE NOTE The only confirmed feast reservation is a paid reservation. After emailing Lady Gabriella to advise of your intent, please be sure to mail your payment to the following:
Barony of Unser Hafen
PO Box 2192
Loveland, CO 80539

Checks should be made to: SCA Inc., Barony of Unser Hafen

Caerthen 12th Night, January 2, 2016 – A Night in Muscovy
Adams County Fairgrounds, Brighton, CO
Hours: 9 am to 9 pm

Come, traveler, come in from the cold! Enjoy the warmth of Caerthen hospitality as we visit the Russian land. Enjoy delicious food, rich garb, dancing and song. More details as we get closer to the day.

Event Stewards: Master Johann and Mistress Kseniya
Feast Stewards: Lady Elaisse and Lady Isabella

Please email the Feast Stewards with allergen questions/ restrictions NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 15, 2015

Fees:

Adult Site is $12/$15 at the door
Child Site fee: 6 and under free
Children 7 to 12: $5
Site fee includes lunch prepared by Lady Elaisse
Non-member surcharge of $5 applies

Feast (Limited to the first 100 paid reservations):
$10/adult
$5/child
Children 6 and under free, but please register your child so the Feast
Stewards have an accurate count

FEAST RESERVATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 15, 2015. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Make checks payable to SCA-Caerthe. Send reservations to:

Lori Abrams-Flohr (THLady Hannah d↵Avila)
17910 E Dickenson Place
Aurora, CO 80013

Menu: (subject to availability, cost, and decision of the Feast Stewards):

On the Table:
Breads: Assorted
Butters: Plain and herb
Pickled veggies: assorted
Pickled herring

First Remove:
Roasted Beet Borscht
Cabbage Slaw
Pirogies

Second Remove:
Chicken w/ walnut, cilantro, and sour cream sauce
Green Bean Salad
Skewered Beef

Dessert:
Assorted Russian Cookies
Another dessert TBD

The Nine Worthies

By: Kurios Halfdan "Two Bears" Ozurrson

The Nine Worthies

By *Kurios* Halfdan "Two Bears" Ôzurrson

PART I: Introduction

Established in the Middle Ages, the list of the Nine Worthies was first penned by Jacques de Longuyon in his book *Voeux du Paon*; a literary work translated as "The Vows of the Peacock." The Vows of the Peacock was considered to be a very popular romance novel in the 14th century. In his book, de Longuyon describes, amongst other things, nine virtues that he associated with the concept of romantic chivalry.

De Longuyon's list of The Nine is separated into three distinct groups, each with three people in it. The list of The Nine starts with the three good Pagans; famous names from Rome and Greece--Hector, Alexander the Great, and Julius Caesar form this list. The second list is comprised of the three good Jews; Joshua, David, and the little known Judas Maccabeus. The last and final section--reserved for the three good Christians--the exalted names of King Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey of Bouillon are recorded.

All of the Worthies, with the exception of two, were conquering heroes--and all of them were noted for their prowess in arms and the honor that they brought to their respective nations. As such, each one of the Nine Worthies are seen as examples of chivalry, and--while the named individuals may have embodied more than one virtue, it was de Longuyon that codified the chivalric virtues and named the singular most influential virtue in each of the Worthies.

Why should we strive to understand the concepts of Chivalry that de Longuyon has ascribed to these nine worthy historical figures? You may be thinking to yourself, "I'm not a knight so I don't really need to read this." However, the Ideals of Chivalry is an important part of our Society; a concept that is meant for all of us and not those of just one Peerage.

Chivalry is one of the many things that brings us together in the Society for Creative Anachronism. However, we often attribute chivalry as being exclusive to those of the Order of Chivalry; those Knights of the Realm who have shown their prowess on the field and exude the essence of chivalry. We often fail to remember that we are all considered Lords and Ladies in the Society and that we too should strive to show chivalry in our dealings with others; no matter what color our belt may be or how long we have been participating.

PART II: The Three Good Pagans

Continuing on with our topic, we take a moment to look at each member of the triads of the Nine Worthies. The Three Good Pagans; Hector, Alexander the Great, and Julius Caesar, are well known names of the ancient past. These three men were considered by many to be accomplished fighters and men of great honor. However, de Longuyon specifically chooses a single chivalric virtue that each of these men represents in his book, "The Vows of the Peacock."

The Three Good Pagans

Hector as the Champion of Troy; a Prince of the mighty city, and a man who fell honorably to Achilles. Hector was known for his great love, and thus, sometimes represents love in the chivalric virtues. However, Hector can also be seen as the embodiment of noble and courtly behavior. When Hector was slain, he perished in a manner that was befitting one of his nature. Hector fell honorably to Achilles; he didn't resort to trickery or cowardice even when he knew that he would be slain in battle. Instead, Hector went into his final battle with nobility, even though the gods had already determined his fate.

The Nine Worthies

Hector could be seen as the actual Epic Hero of Homer's *Iliad*. A Hero can be described as one that abhors deliberate acts of cruelty, defamation, and injustice. While Achilles was the conqueror, Hector showed great noble and courtly behavior when he faced his foes. For example, in Hector's duel with Ajax that ends in a stalemate, Hector commends Ajax for his courage and skill. The two exchange gifts and end up making a short truce between the two armies in which they take time to bury the dead.

Alexander the Great is well known for his conquering of many lands including Persia, Egypt, and the militaristic incursion into India. Medieval scholars saw him as the main figure who spread the knowledge of the Greeks into these dark areas of the ancient world. In Alexander; the virtue of generosity is seen. Through his many victories, Alexander amassed great fortunes. With the money that he received he not only paid his army very well, but he also founded at least ten cities with the fortunes he reaped from conquered empires.

However, this was not the only extent of Alexander's generosity. A story is told where a beggar met Alexander on the road. The beggar, in great need, asked for alms from the mighty conquer. Even though the beggar had no right to ask Alexander for money, Alexander threw him several gold coins. When asked why he gave the beggar gold instead of copper, Alexander replied "copper coins would adequately suite the beggars need, but gold coins suit Alexander's giving."

Julius Caesar is considered by many to be the father of the Roman Empire; the Empire which would later become the cradle of the Christian religion. While some documents hail Julius Caesar as the defender of women, research into the historical Caesar shows little evidence to support this idea. It is, perhaps, through classical literature accessible during the writing of *The Vows* that de Longuyon came to his conclusion that Caesar personified the chivalric notion of protecting women.

What can be identified clearly, however, is that Julius Caesar can be seen as the embodiment of prowess. It is through his militaristic and political prowess that Caesar reached the highest station in Rome and acquired the love of the common man. Caesar had been born into a lower governmental position and progressed through Roman society quickly through his overall prowess and determination. This historical fact quickly points to the notion that Caesar is connected with the Chivalric notion of prowess.

Putting it Together

Understanding who these historical figures are and what place they held in the Medieval mindset are important to us in the Society. What can we learn from these three examples of chivalry and how can we incorporate them into our groups? One obvious place that these virtues can be witnessed and expressed is on the field of battle; fighters should take a moment to show the examples of Hector, Alexander, and Caesar no matter if they are a knight or not. The virtues that these three men represent; courage, generosity, and prowess, are prime examples of battlefield virtues. Having courage to face your opponent, bestowing them with generosity after the battle, and continually working on martial prowess are all ways that fighters can emulate the Three Good Pagans.

However, for those of us who do not fight, we can take the example that the Three Good Pagans show us and incorporate them into our Society life. Having the courage of Hector to introduce yourself to the new person who just

arrived at the event is definitely a good start. Showing the generosity of Alexander by inviting somebody into your encampment out of harsh weather is another good example. The prowess of Caesar can be exemplified in excelling in what you do; be it crafts, holding an officer position, or even setting up your encampment.

PART III: The Three Good Jews

De Longuyon took a great risk in adding Jewish people to his book, "The Vows of the Peacock." Considering the amount of anti-Semitism in the Middle Ages, his use of three Jewish men as figures to be admired could have come at a considerable risk to his person. However, the term that De Longuyon uses extensively, "heroes of The Old Law," helps to incorporate these three individuals into the Christian traditions; and thus, approved by the general reader.

Of the three Triads, the Jewish heroes are a group that is discussed by de Longuyon in the least detail. However, understanding that the history of the Jewish people was little known by the Medieval man, even highly learned ones, it comes to no surprise why de Longuyon detailed so little of this group of the Nine Worthies—he may not have known himself.

Joshua, from the tribe of Nun, was the leader of the Israelites after the death of Moses. He led his people into the Promised Land and conquered the nations that were already dwelling there; eventually carving out the kingdom of Israel. However, it is before this time when Joshua was sent as one of the Twelve Observers that Joshua is attributed the chivalric virtue of truth.

In the Book of Numbers we see the story take place. Twelve men are sent into the Promised Land to scout out the enemy. After forty days of gathering information, they come back and make the report to Moses. Ten of the Observers were frightened of the enemy and gave false reports while Joshua and Caleb, two of the observers who were not afraid of their enemies, gave a truthful account of what awaited across the Jordan River.

David, the biblical hero and king of Israel, is-or-was representative of the virtue of purity. At first glance, David appears anything but the symbol of Chivalric purity, and in some cases it is true. However, the type of purity that is being referenced is that of purity of the heart; which includes purity in our morals, motives, and methods.

Throughout the story of David in the Bible, we can see this purity of the heart take place; especially in his decision not to slay King Saul in the cave; even when it would have been advantageous of him to do so; and once again when he finds King Saul asleep in the tent. Additionally, the story of the later years of David's life where he takes mercy upon the last of Saul's line is another fine example of the purity of David's heart.

Judas Maccabeus was a Jewish hero who stood up against Antiochus IV, a Seleucid king who had forcibly conquered the Kingdom of Israel and all but outlawed the nation's religion. It is from his loyalty to his cause and his ability to inspire it in others that he personifies the chivalric virtue of loyalty.

It was Judas who led a rebellion and fought against the enemy using guerilla warfare; considering how woefully outnumbered his forces were; tactically it was his only option. Eventually, Judas amassed a large army and the external war against Antiochus was won for a short time.

The Nine Worthies

Eventually, the Seleucid Empire, now under the command of Antiochus V, retaliated and sent a large army against Judas Maccabeus. Seeing the large numbers of the enemy forces before them, most of the Jewish rebellion army deserted, leaving Judas with a small number of loyal men to face their fates in the Battle of Elasa where Judas and his men perished.

Putting it Together

Incorporating the virtues of the Three Good Jews takes a more personal note than the other two triads of Worthies. Their virtues push us to look deep within and are more difficult to express in our everyday outward appearances. However, these virtues are evident on the battlefield and are often shown by those who take up the sword. Having Joshua's truth means that a fighter calls shots that are good, no matter what he expects to gain in the tourney. The purity of David is fighting for a good cause; such as for the honor of your loved one or for the sheer enjoyment of the match. Judas' loyalty is seen when a fighter is loyal to his master and his honor.

For those of us who do not fight, we can look at the examples of the Three Good Jews and express them ourselves. Exemplifying Joshua's truth can be as simple as speaking the truth to those who ask for honest opinions. The purity of David is having clear morals and motives when dealing with others, no matter what station or degree. Judas Maccabeus' loyalty is the loyalty we give to those of our household, our friends, and those we serve under.

PART IV: The Three Good Christians

The final triad that de Longuyon discusses in his book, "The Vows of the Peacock," focus on the Three Good Christians; King Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey of Bouillon. While most of the heroic tales of these individuals were fictionalized after the actual events, de Longuyon utilized these stories when he codified the chivalric attributes to the Nine Worthies. However, even though some of the tales were disproportionate to the actual person, the list of the Christian Worthies still sheds light on aspects of historical chivalry.

King Arthur, the heroic and tragic figure that straddles both myth and history, is often titled the "Once and Future King of England." Arthur is well known for his enchanted sword--Excalibur, his Knights of the Round Table, and his quest for the Holy Grail. Although there are many heroic tales of King Arthur, it is one of his more human moments that helps solidify the aspect that he represents; humility.

When Arthur's wife, Guinevere, was to be burned at the stake for her adultery with Lancelot; we see the human side of Arthur. At first he cannot bear to see the woman he loves killed; but Mordred is right beside him; confronting him. Arthur had a choice to kill the queen or kill the law; both of which Arthur didn't want to do. Instead, Arthur shows great humility in accepting that he is, in fact, just a man, and relinquishes his kingship to protect both his love and the law.

Charlemagne was King of the Franks and later Emperor of the Romans until his death in 814 A.D. His leadership brought forth a new renaissance of ideas, a revival of art and culture, and helped to solidify the control of the Catholic Church. Through a series of military campaigns and various programs that he instituted, Charlemagne labored to bring order to a chaotic Europe.

Charlemagne is noted for his many chivalric virtues, but most especially his sense of justice. It is written that the Emperor of the Romans felt sympathy to

the common man of his realm; many of which who were repressed by the local government officials. Charlemagne's belief was that government should benefit those who are governed, and as such, he sent investigators to all corners of his kingdom to administer justice, to inspect the existing government, and promote and revitalize both civil and religious duties within his empire.

Godfrey of Bouillon was the Duke of Lower Lorraine who, at the summons of the Pope, helped lead the French Knights to the wall of Jerusalem. After successfully capturing the city, Godfrey was elected the ruler of Jerusalem; but his religious piety prompted him to accept the title of Defender of the Holy Sepulcher instead, stating that the title King of Jerusalem belonged to God. Although he died a year later, Godfrey had extended the reaches of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and helped to establish the foundations of that kingdom.

Godfrey is attributed the chivalric virtue of faith. His faith is articulated especially in his refusing the title of King of Jerusalem. While Godfrey's virtue of faith shows in other examples; most of them are developed and added upon in the later years when the sagas of Godfrey were written. However, according to most accounts, he was known as a gentle and pious man who journeyed to the Holy Land to liberate Jerusalem for the Christians.

Putting it Together

Again, it seems that the fighters have it easy when demonstrating the virtues of these three Worthies. A good fighter doesn't have to always comment about his ability on the battlefield, instead he just needs to employ the humility of Arthur and let his actions speak for him. Additionally, displaying the justice of Charlemagne would mean that a fighter should always seek the right path; even if it is the path is difficult and arduous. The faith of Godfrey doesn't necessarily mean that the fighter should take up a religion, simply that the fighter should have faith in his ability and his beliefs.

For those who do not fight, the virtues the Three Good Christians represent can be a little trickier to express in the Society. However, Arthur's humility can be conveyed by being humble at events; to know when to step back and not have to be in control or to have the last word. The justice of Charlemagne can be seen when we work with other people; to do what is right instead of what is popular or easiest. Finally, the faith of Godfrey is having faith in ourselves, our beliefs, our family or clan, our Peers, and faith in the royalty to do what is right.

PART V: Final Thoughts

As I have mentioned before, the concept of chivalry and how we act towards one another is an important part of the Society for Creative Anachronism. It doesn't matter if you wear the white belt or not; chivalry is for all members of our group. It is what binds us together; a part of what is termed "the Dream", and as such, merits at least a basic understanding.

There are several versions of the Knightly Virtues that can be found; ranging from simple lists to extravagant reams of information, and some people may choose one list over the other. By understanding where these concepts derived from, namely the words written long ago by de Longuyon in his "Vows of the Peacock," we can begin to understand the basics of what chivalry is from a historical aspect and focus on incorporating these values in our lives in the Society for Creative Anachronism and our mundane lives as well.

Chaucer—The Triumph of English

By: Master Dafydd of the Glens

Chaucer - The Triumph of English

by Dafydd of the Glens OL

Background:

The Hundred Years' War (1337 to 1453) was one of those spectacularly pointless episodes in European history which really beggar the imagination. Edward III of England (grandson of Longshanks) had decided that he was the rightful king of France. By the feudal laws of the time, he very probably was. Thanks to Henry of Anjou (his more illustrious ancestor) he already owned quite a lot of France. But he decided he wanted the rest as well.

It wasn't possible, with the technology of the day, to reduce castles except by siege and by laying waste to the entire countryside around them. It is true that Henry V managed to reduce Harfleur by bombardment in 1415, but mostly the cannon of the day simply weren't up to it. So yes, the English could beat the French in battle whenever they felt like it, and did. It didn't help all that much, in terms of conquest, but hey, what the hell? If we have to fight we may as well win. After the Battle of Poitiers, however, the French came temporarily to their senses and decided to stonewall. Eventually both sides signed the Treaty of Bretigny in 1360 and brought the war to an end. For the moment.

The really important part of this was that it meant that the Norman barons who held land in both France and England had to decide where they were going to live, and who they were going to be. Those who decided that their English lands were more important surrendered or exchanged their French lands, moved to England and became, for the first time, truly English. And began to speak English. Up until then, Norman-French was the official language of England. Within a decade, English was on the rise.

English Poetry:

If you ever want to cheer yourself up about the utterly deplorable English poetry of the late 20th century, have a read of some Early Middle English. There isn't much in the way of translations around, for the simple reason that nobody has ever thought it was worth it. The glories of Anglo-Saxon poetry (what has been described as 30,000 lines of alliterative verse on four dragon-scorched manuscripts) gave way, after the Norman Conquest (1066), to the most turgid drivel it has ever been my misfortune to have to pass exams in. Pretty much the only one worth reading is *The Owl and the Nightingale*, which is a translation of a French original. And suddenly around 1360.....

Piers Plowman appears. It was the Harry Potter of its day. Personally I find this one a bit of a trial (like HP), but it was certainly new, profoundly original and extremely controversial. It is an epic poem (book-length) and has in the starring role not a knight, king, princess, priest or noble, but a common ploughman. That was scary enough for the Church, but the biting social satire was even more frightening. And when Christ puts on Piers Plowman's armour, well....There are lots of copies of *Piers Plowman* around, so it would be fair to assume that this heady stuff was extremely popular.

What is really interesting about *PP* is that it is not only in English, it's written in what we now call Alliterative Revival. Rhyme was a French thing (probably stolen from the Arabs), but English poetry had matching consonants at the start of words. The most thrilling couplet in Anglo-Saxon goes:

> *"Hyge sceal the headra, heort the cenre/ mod sceal the mare þe uren maegen lytlaþ"*
>
> "Mind must be sharper, heart the keener/ spirit burn the brighter as our strength lessens" (translation mine).

Rhyme, they must have thought, was for girlies and Frenchmen. If you're stuck in the Battle of Maldon with your commander dead and Vikings all around you, and you can't leave because you're the sworn liegemen of Duke Byrtnoth and it's your duty to say things like "I will not stir a foot's pace from here, now that my dear lord lies dead", then you really need alliteration to mark the fateful occasion.

So in *PP* we read of "*h*eremites on a *h*epe with *h*oked staves". Suddenly England discovers its heroic past and decides to revive its poetic forms to give vent to the ur-Protestantism of the day. As in Yeah, the Church is corrupt and venal and we know that. We're going to have an ordinary English peasant put the Church to shame by showing true Christian virtues. And just to make sure that I don't get into real trouble with the authorities I will create an abstraction called

Chaucer—The Triumph of English

Holy Church, which is always right. If ordinary clergy don't live up to the standards set by Holy Church, of course... well, that's their problem. But you can't understand the Lollard movement (proto-Protestantism in England) without knowing about *PP*.

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight:

The greatest of the English poets for my money from that epoch is the anonymous author of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. He also wrote *Pearl*, which is indeed a pearl, but very orthodox in its theology. *Gawain* is altogether other: courtly, civilized, sophisticated, clever and humane. Nobody knows where the story came from. He may have made it up. (I say he, though we really don't know who wrote it. Robert Massy, a Cheshire squire, made the earliest surviving copy. Whether he was the author is another matter...) Anyway, here's what happens:

King Arthur and his knights and ladies are having a great time at a huge New Year's party, when a monstrous green knight enters the hall and challenges Arthur and his knights. You are to cut off my head, he says, then return to my castle in a year's time and endure a similar blow from my sword. There is a certain amount of shifting uncomfortably in chairs until Sir Gawain decides to accept the challenge. He swings his mighty sword, off goes the Green Knight's head, the Green Knight tucks his head under his arm and says thanks, see you in a year's time.

12 months later, Gawain sets out in his best armour, and gets lost in the mountains and is put up for three days by Sir Bertilak Hautdesert and his incredibly sexy wife. Let's play a game, says Bertilak. I'm going hunting and I will let my wife entertain you. The deal is: anything she gives you, you have to give to me. After day 1, Gawain gives Bertilak a big kiss, having received same from Mrs B. Sir B laughs and compliments Gawain on his courtly virtues. Day 2: 2 kisses. On the last day, Mrs B dresses up in a revealingly low-cut bodice and really has a go at seducing Gawain. He accepts three kisses, but manages to keep his virtue. Mrs B also offers him a magic locket thing which will ward off any blow from a weapon. Gawain doesn't want to die, so he accepts the locket. Later, he gives the three kisses to Bertilak, but keeps the locket.

Next day, Gawain goes to the appointed place to face the Green Knight, who, you have probably guessed by now, is none other than Sir Bertilak himself. Sir B makes a couple of practice swings and the axe comes whirling down. It nicks Gawain's skin, but, miraculously, his head still seems to be on, so he says right, I've endured your blow. If you want another shot, then arm and stand ready! No, no, no, says Sir B. I arranged all of this to test your knightly virtue. I gave you the nick because you fell a little short. By the terms of our agreement, you should have returned the locket to me. But on the whole, I'd have to say you did extremely well and I am very proud of you. Well done, Gawain! Go back to Camelot in all honour. And all ends happily.

(NOTE: JRR Tolkien, better known as a fantasy writer, has done superb translations of both *Pearl* and *Gawain*. His translations excel not least because he and EV Gordon did the definitive edition of *Gawain*, which is a masterpiece in itself.)

Chaucer—The Triumph of English

Ricardian Poetry and Chaucer:

The age of Chaucer is, we should remember, also the age of the Gawain-poet, and for that matter Gower and Lydgate, though their repute is in eclipse these days. The late 14th century in so many ways resembles the late 20th century. Most intelligent people thought that war is stupid, mercy is preferable to revenge, you shouldn't try people too high in their search for a Christian life and tolerance is preferable to bigotry. This was also the reign of Richard II, who despite being the son of the dreaded Black Prince also thought these things, most of the time. He lost his throne and his life because he didn't understand how to be a king, but he certainly shared these values. The trouble was that the 14th century was an age where frightful things happened on a daily basis, and you could no longer pretend that all was well when it clearly wasn't. Europe was never the same after the Black Death, and those who refused to adapt to a changing world got stung badly.

Geoffrey Chaucer really founded modern English. Given what I have said about *Piers Plowman* and *Gawain*, this was something of an achievement. Of course, Chaucer was fortunate. The Middle English which was his native tongue turned out to be more user-friendly for future generations than the West Midland dialects (just to give you an idea, the first line of *Gawain* runs: *"Sithan the sege and the assaut watz sesed at Troie").* In any event, he belonged to the cosmopolitan South-East/ London area, which was pretty much the culturally dominant centre of power. And he was a class act.

Who was he? Well, he wasn't a humble poet, by any means. He was a senior public servant and his wife's brother-in-law was the Duke of Lancaster (John of Gaunt). This certainly helped. He knew his world better than most. And the amazing thing about his breezy, urbane, civilized world picture is that the Arcadian delights mentioned in the General Prologue disguise, without denying, the fact that his world was a terribly fragile place. A third of Europe had been wiped out by the Black Death when he was a child. It kept coming back, just when you thought it was safe to ride happily out through the idyllic countryside. Britain and France were still enemies and a kind of guerilla combat in the southern reaches of the Angevin Empire was more or less a constant reminder of the horrors of total war. The kingdom was under constant threat of aristocratic intrigue, which eventually boiled over with the Lancastrian usurpation of 1399 and the establishment of a brutal and cruel police state. No-one knew better than Chaucer how fragile the England he loved really was.

Canterbury Tales:

"Whan that Aprille with his shoures sote/ the droghte of Marche hath perced to the rote" is the idyllic start to this great work. Everybody is setting out to go off on holidays, or pilgrimage as it was then called. And they meet in the Tabard Inn to tell stories to each other. The important bit about this is that he out-Boccaccios Boccaccio. The latter's *Decameron* was a series of tall tales and rude ones (or *fabliaux*, as rude stories were called then). Chaucer is miles better, because his stories, and in particular how they are told, tell us a great deal about the person telling them.

Thus the Knight's Tale is based on a French courtly romance about two lovers (Arcite and Palamoun) who are wooing the same damsel, but he butchers the story. The lovers are not courtly men but arrogant, self-seeking brigands. Emily, the object of their affection, is a cipher who is comically tacked onto the end of rhyming couplets just to remind us that she's what it's all supposed to be about. Why does the Knight mess it up? Terry Jones (better known as a TV comedian) would have us believe that this reflects the decline of knighthood and its replacement by bands of brutal mercenaries. Most scholars agree that Jones greatly overstates his case; but yes, he has a point. It's true that Chaucer's Knight has fought for pretty much everyone EXCEPT King and Country, so as a repository of knightly virtues this bloke is a bit of a dud.

The Pardoner's Tale is one of the most famous, because it's the old tale of how a hoard of gold manages to kill everyone who wants it. "Radix Malorum est Cupiditas" he warns his listeners (Greed is the root of evil); and he makes out a convincing case with his spine-chilling story. And what does this man of God do for a living? Why, he sells forgiveness of sins for money. Look who's talking? This sort of thing is very typical of Chaucer. The Prioress tells a lovely tale about a

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little saint allegedly martyred by the Jews. Very nice. And what does this lady wear? Gorgeous clothes, jewels, a gold brooch with "Amor Vincit Omnia" on it (Love conquers all). She's educated, too.

"And Frensh she spak ful fair and fetisly/ after the scole of Stratford atte Bowe/ for Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe."

Do please note that Chaucer has little time for savage satire. This isn't his way. He just asks us to admire this worldly, pleasure-seeking woman of God, listen to her nauseating story, and think Yep. That's the sort of person who gets to run our monastic institutions. Hey, that's life. Gentle mockery is his metier.

He can do fabliaux just like Boccaccio. The Miller's Tale is a good one, involving the immortal line - a man thinking aloud when kissing what he imagines to be his lover through her window on a dark night - "Maydes have no berd??!" Indeed. But his preference is elsewhere. His ostensible self-portrait is the tale of Sir Thopas, which is so appallingly dull and clanking that it breaks off abruptly with the words: "Here the host stinteth Chaucer of his tale." Enough, already! But we think that this is just Chaucer being modest. For a more convincing picture.....

The Franklin is often taken to be a self-portrait. This Franklin is a man of note (he has sat in Parliament): warm-hearted, generous, pleasure-loving but kind and conscientious. And his tale is a beauty. Sir Arveragus goes off to the wars, leaving his lovely wife Dorigene home in Brittany. She walks on the seashore and deplores the "grisly, feendly rokkes blakke" which may endanger her husband's ship. She would do anything to make them disappear. She is loved by a young squire called Aurelius, who overhears her and thinks of a plan. He hires an expensive wizard who makes the rocks disappear. She has incautiously promised to do anything for this service and is distraught with grief.

Sir A returns. Hi darling I'm home. good grief what's wrong dear? She confesses all. Sir A says well your word must be honoured. If you have promised your body to this Aurelius then so it must be. Still sobbing, Dorigene meets the joyfully expectant Aurelius. He can't break her heart like this, and sends her back to her husband unravished. He meets the wizard, who asks have you enjoyed your lady? No I haven't! he sobs and confesses his act of generosity. The wizard takes pity on him and returns the fee. Now which of these, asks the Franklin, was the most honourable? You can make out a good case for everybody here, unlike in the thuggish Knight's Tale. And in my contention, this is what Chaucer wanted the world to be like. A world where sins are forgiven, everybody acts with courage and generosity and all ends happily.

What a lovely man!

The Origins of Feudalism

By: Baron Hrolf Herjolffsen, OP

The Origins of Feudalism

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After the collapse of the Western Roman state, a void was left in the civic life of Europe. This area still relied on the Eastern Roman Empire as the source of culture and wealth. However, the indifference of the Byzantines to the military plight of much of the abandoned parts of the Empire, in particular those parts not on a Mediterranean coast (Lewis 1951), eventually led to a new independence of attitude. New rulers, such as Charlemagne, while slavishly aping Byzantine garb and manners, became very independent in other matters. When this was combined with the long-term attempts of the Bishops of Rome to gain more power for their office, the result was the birth of a new system (Duchesne 1972).

The main stimulus for this new system was military. Due to the usual pressures from central Asia, a whole series of barbarian cultures were again impacting on the West. The former barbarians (Visigoths, Franks and Burgunds for instance) had adopted as much of the paraphernalia of Rome as they could and now found themselves as representatives of 'civilised' culture attempting to hold on to land (Veyne 1992). At the same time, the Muslim tide was flowing up the Iberian peninsula and seemed unstoppable. The Vandals of North Africa and the Visigoths of Spain were both fast disappearing.

The maintenance of a military force is expensive. Few rulers had any standing forces at this time, and most campaigns in pre-modern times took place in times when people could be spared from harvest (Contamine 1984). However, neither non-horticulturally based barbarians nor religious zealots follow these schedules. This meant a permanent military force had to be raised in order for the European cultures to survive. Given the lack of a cohesive tax base, and indeed the lack of coinage and a money economy, this could not be done by a central government (even where this existed). Such economy as existed was tied to a local exchange circulation of goods on a village level. Thus the creation of a military force was achieved by grouping farmers together into an administrative unit that had a large enough surplus of production that it could afford to support and equip a single fighter. This man was their 'servant' of war – a knight (Bloch 1975, Reynolds, 1996 #224). He was paid a 'fee' for this service. Naturally, as time went by the new monopoly of violence that the knights enjoyed led them to reverse this status and to seek a justification for their role. This is naturally a very simplified view of this process.

The original collection of farmers who had been grouped together to support a knight became tied to the land that was connected to that knight. If any one of them were to leave, then the land may no longer be able to support the knight. Thus the 'fee' became what we now call the 'fief'. The professional military were dependant on the economic well being of 'their' peasants, and the wise among them worked hard at ensuring that those in their charge prospered. Unfortunately, there were not many feudal lords who fulfilled this criterion.

The new states that were springing up derived a common spiritual authority from the Church, which was rapidly leaving behind its Orthodox beliefs and striking out in new directions. One of these directions involved the notion of the Great Chain of Being (Lovejoy 1970)(see last issue). Whereas Orthodox Christianity (like the Celtic) relied heavily on the Synod (a council of Bishops) in decision making, the attempt by the Bishops of Rome to hold temporal and spiritual power drew heavily on a notion of centralised power. Whilst the doctrine of Papal Infallibility was not yet fully accepted (indeed, it was often decreed as heretical) the Popes had begun to exercise strong control where they could. In particular, they wished to extend this over all of the Christian Ecumen. As a means of giving spiritual blessing to this control, they invoked the Great Chain.

Seeing that God stood above all, and a direct line extended down to the lowest plants, then Mankind had a distinct place in the Chain. However, as all could see, all Mankind was not equal. For a start Man was above Woman (Leyser 1995) – a position that was well supported by scripture. As well, the spiritual was obviously above the temporal and the lord above the serf. Thus a chain of obligation and loyalty flowed from the Pope to the Kings, from them to their Lords and from them to the populace. This line of ties, bonds, and obligations was thus seen as being blessed

by God. A breach of them thus involved a denial of God and, at least, severe censure. In the most extreme case, this meant excommunication (several monarchs received this penalty, John of England being one).

Note that this was not a one way street. Just as God had duty to man, the King had duty to his vassals. A breach either way was regarded seriously, although very few serfs had the means to pursue remedy.

Once the Great Chain began to be questioned by heretical sects, this also called into question ties of fealty. Many of the peasant movements of the Middle Ages were tied up in this double radicalism of spiritual and secular reformism (Lambert 1992, Le Roy Ladurie, 1978 #345). Once the Great Chain collapsed under the impact of secular humanism and Protestantism, support for the ideas of fealty and vassalage likewise evaporated. This was first to be observed in southern Germany (which started its conversion to a wage economy from the 13th century) (Cipolla 1976), but was not to be finally extinguished until the 20th century (in Russia).

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The Origins of Feudalism

Folk Tales as Insight into the Medieval Mind

THL EllaAnne de Kari

Folk Tales as Insight into the Medieval Mind
by THL EllaAnne de Kari

The Beginning

My fascination with tales and the medieval period started long before I joined the SCA. About 20 years ago, in fact, when I experienced one of those medieval dream moments, out of the blue, on a cold December evening in England.

I had been in England for a couple of years, living about an hour by train west of London. As with most Americans living in England at the time, I had many visitors from the states. That December was no different. It was Christmas Eve, and my visitors and I ventured out to the Royal Standard, (http://www.rsoe.co.uk/) a pub that had been serving beer for over 900 years. It was a cold, snowy night, and by 10 pm, we were the only guests in the old bar.

The old bar was lit by candles and a wood fire in the large fireplace. There were no electric lights. The proprietress and her husband came out with barley wine and champagne and settled in at our table. And, we started sharing stories and Christmas Carols in the same way people have done in that very spot for almost a thousand years. It opened a window for me into the medieval mind.

What do tales tell about the culture, people, and mindset of the storyteller and their audiences? This article includes some ideas about what folk and fairy tales are, a timeline of when tales were written down in the middle ages, using tales to gain insight.

What is a Folk Tale? A Fairy Tale?

Folk tales and fairy tales are at the juncture of myth, history, and local lore. "The gods of ancient mythology were changed into the demi-gods and heroes of ancient poetry, these demi-gods again become, at a later age the principal characters of our nursery tales". The myths evolved over time with the evolution of culture and language through migration.

There are several definitions of Folk and Fairy Tales: Some believe they are "a complex assemblage of certain norms, certain impulsions, a canvas of the moment's tradition, which interpreters enliven with the embellishments of individual creation" [[2]] Others differentiate between folk and fairy tale.

The following are characteristic of a Folk Tale [[3]]:

- Linear plot
- Tales that reflect the word and belief systems of their audiences
- Characters from "real life", such as husbands, wives, peasants, rascals, and the occasional doctor or priest.
- Most folk tales have a plot where one person takes another's goods, money, or honor. Most don't have a happy ending.

For example, in contrast to Fairy Tales with the proverbial happy endings, the folk tales deal not with "the joys of **getting** married, but about the difficulties of **being** married." [[4]] Folk tales are easy to follow and easy to remember, in part because they deal with familiar aspects of the human condition. [[5]]

Types of folk tale

There are three basic types of folk tale:

1. Traditions handed down about famous people and events of national importance
2. Memories of local events that have been passed down, and often significantly changed in transmission.
3. Tales that purport to be told of an actual occurrence [[6]]

Fairy Tales, on the other hand deal with magic and enchantment through connecting with the people in fairyland. These fairy people have many names, but often were just called "the little people" to avoid invoking the power of saying their actual name. The word "Fairy" comes from the Latin "fatum", meaning to enchant; through the French word "fey" or "feerie", meaning illusion. The origins of fairy tales include: the gods and demi-gods of myths, myths of the earth and nature, and the myths from ancient India.

While we cannot study tales that were told, we can study those tales that were written down. In the following timeline, you can see how the tales migrated through time and space.

Timeline of Tales

As we cannot trace the oral transmission of tales, we must work with the literary transmission. Here is a brief timeline from Laura Kready's book, A Study of Fairy Tales. [[7]]

Folk Tales as Insight to the Medieval Mind

4000 BC - Tales of Ancient Egypt, written on papyrus
600 BC - Homeric Legends
550 AD - The Panchatantra, from India, Animal Tales
10th Century - Panchatantra – Arabic version
10th Century - Reynard the Fox in Latin
1000 AD - The King Book of Persia by Ferdousee
11th Century - Panchatantra – Greek version
1148 - Ysengrimus poem about the Fox, Ghent
1180 - Reinhart – 12 tales in German
12th Century - Panchatantra – Persian version
1200 AD - Sanskrit Tales
1230 - Roman de Renard, 27 tales in French
1250 - Reinaert, composed near Ghent
13th Century - The Book of Sinbad (Hebrew, Arabic, Persian versions)
13th Century - Of the Vox and the Wolf (Reynard tales), English Poem
1326 - The Gesta Romanorum – Latin tales of morality
1481 - Reynard the Fox, England
1485 - Historie von Reynaert de Vos, Dutch
1548 - The Thousand and One Arabian Nights
1550 - Straparola's Nights – 21 stories from the lips of 10 women

The Reynard Tale addresses the basic struggle for existence, which was characteristic of Feudal life. In the tale, cunning opposes force and triumphs over it. The adventurous hero is appealing because of his ability to adapt himself to circumstances and to master them.

Using Tales to Gain Insight

In this way, folk tales from a particular time and place, can again be a lens for us to look back and try to understand the perspectives of this people who knew, told, and listened to these stories.

Some Guidelines for Using Folk Tales to Interpret the Past

- Understand the type of evidence (written, oral, archaeological)
- Understand the history, cultural and religious beliefs
- Use reliable folklore.
- Understand the local contexts.

"We must, learn the details of the conditions in which their lives are led, and come to know the countryside in all its aspects, and in all its moods, winter and summer, night and day.

We must pay careful attention even to material things, if we are to appreciate how the countryman's knowledge enables him to make good use of natural productions for making his tools, buildings, foods, and medicines" [[8]]

Even if we have a strong understanding of the history and culture of a place and time, the tales we have, have been filtered by every storyteller that has touched the tale.

Two Example Tales

I will give examples of the first two types of folk tales here – tales that are traditions of famous people and events and tales that are memories of local event that change over the years.

A traditional Tale from the Fens

The fens were a wide expanse of marshland in Eastern England. Several centuries ago, they were drained and are now agricultural flatlands. During the middle ages, the Fens were considered by some a scary and dangerous place. Travelers not familiar with the marshes often become lost and stories were told of worse fates than wandering lost. The Fen folk were considered somewhat queer, insular, and protective of their own. Camping one year in the modern era in East Anglia, I had the opportunity to learn first hand some tales of "those" folk who were native to the area. Famous medieval towns in this area of England include Cambridge and Bury St. Edmonds, and Ely.

The Fens

In this tale from the Fens, a man from the Fens, "an outlaw" befriends King Canute, which aids him in exacting revenge on the local monastery for injustices to his family.

How Littleport Began

One day while traveling in the northeastern part of the Kingdom, the King decided he wanted some time alone to fish. He arranged for a boat and left all his men camped on a low hill and entered the Fens marshland. He appeared to be a common man. Appearances, however can be deceiving. His crown was securely placed in the bottom of the boat, and his men were on watch for any signal of trouble.

Folk Tales as Insight to the Medieval Mind

Suddenly, as often happens in the Fens, the weather shifted from bright warm sunshine to grey fog. In addition, the tides shifted and Canute felt the boat being drawn out to sea. He took shelter from the tides by going up a small creek and found refuge in the tiny hut of a Fenman called Legres.

Legres, was dirt poor, but there was a warm fire, and he offered the stranger ale, food, and a dry place to sleep. In the course of the night, the stranger heard the tale of Legres' wrongs. Legres told of his wife being carried off and raped by the monks at the Grange. He told of being flogged when he attempted to rescue her, and of having the vicious dogs set on them as they made their escape. He told of how his wife died the next year, giving birth to a son.

That was 18 years ago, he told the stranger, and every year on the boy's birthday Legres said he killed a monk and cut a notch on his dagger. Legres explained that this night the boy was out tending to the animals.

When they settled down for the night, the King found the fleas were so vicious that he could not sleep. As soon as the rain and wind quieted, the king quietly left the hut and wrapped his cloak close around himself, and settled into the bottom of his boat to fall asleep.

The sun rose early the next morning and the bright rays warmed and woke the king. He heard splashes and peered over the edge of his boat to see a beautiful girl who came down to the water to bathe. After she bathed, she covered herself with mud and put on boy's clothes and went up to the hut, not knowing she had been seen. Canute realized that she was Legres' son.

Later that morning, Canute helps Legres exact revenge on the monks at the Grange. He signaled to his men by flashing his crown and they attacked the Grange and killed a number of the dissolute monks. The rest were set to digging and building, and a little town was founded, with a brewery and a mill, a port and an inn, and by the Kings decree, Legres was in charge of the whole town.—The End

There are several potential perspectives into the medieval mindset in this tale. For example, the value of simple comforts on a cold rainy night, and the desire to have an omnipotent authority on earth that will protect the common man from oppression. Briggs claimed this mindset can be found in many tales and ballads and is characteristic of the peasants' risings in medieval times." [[12]]

There is also the mindset that fate may suddenly intervene and all life's basic needs, and more, would be met.

Memories of Local Events

The second type of tale is one that has been told and re-told through the centuries, localized to specific time and places. By comparing these tales, we might glean some insight into the beliefs and cultural attitudes of a specific time. The example of this type of tale, here, is the Fatal Hair-Do. The first version of the Fatal Hairdo is from the *Speculum Laicorum*, a late thirteenth-century collection of English exempla. Exempla are anecdotes that illustrate a moral point, often used in medieval sermons.

The Fatal Hairdo

A lady in Oxfordshire took so long over the adornment of her hair that she never arrived at church until just before the end of Mass. Everyone noticed her entrance; she was beautiful, walking tall and proud, with her mass of golden curls. Every Sunday it was the same, until one Sunday. That day, the devil descended upon her head in the form of a spider, gripping her hair with its legs. She was beside herself with fright, but could find no way to remove the spider. Neither prayer, nor exorcism, nor holy water, worked. Finally, the local abbot displayed the holy sacrament before the spider and she is saved.

A slightly different version can be found in Robert of Brunne's Handlyng Synne from 1308 [[15]]. In this version, the woman was extremely proud of her hair and headdresses. After she died, she appeared to her husband's squire to warn them against the sin of vanity and pride.

A final medieval version has the woman coming back from the dead, tormented by toads and scorpions on her head. Toads, scorpions, and fire were associated with the devil and hell. [[16]]

While these tales are about the sins of vanity and pride, the first exempla, shows the potential for redemption when the Abbot saves the woman just in the nick of time. In the next two exempla, there is the medieval notion that torture and punishment after death relate to the sin committed in life; for example, the torture for a sin of vanity of one's head/hair would focus on the person's head. This is a common theme in medieval folk tales and may offer some insight into the medieval mind about sin and punishment.

Folk Tales as Insight to the Medieval Mind

There are several modern versions, most associated with massive teased hairdos. One version was of a young girl, who spent hours teasing her hair, and applying hair spray. She stopped needing to wash her hair because it was so lacquered. Eventually, spiders and bugs took up residence and their bites and stings caused her painful death.

In another version, the girl becomes mysteriously ill at school and a fellow student sees blood running down the girls neck. Despite being rushed to the hospital, she dies, purportedly from wasp stings.

In conclusion, these tales of the fatal hairdo show the shift from the medieval beliefs that God was central to all actions in life and death to modern notions of the importance of cleanliness.

Be sure to check out Current Urban Legends (http://urbanlegends.about.com/od/horrors/a/fatal_hairdo.htm) if you are interested in more modern versions on this topic!

Footnotes

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A Brief Note on Largesse

By: Baron Hrolf Herjolffsen, OP

A Brief Note on Largesse
by Baron Hrolf Herjolfssen OP

Seeing that we are coming up to our first Coronation, we should be starting to seriously think about the ceremony and the customs we wish to have in our new Kingdom. One that we could look at is the issue of largesse. In the Lochac this is typically done in chocolate coin, although some groups have struck their own coin for this purpose (1). In the West Kingdom the Moneyersand Coiners Guild has operated for some time for the main purpose of producing coin for this purpose.

According to the Macquarie Dictionary, largesse is the "generous bestowal of gifts". In the SCA it means the distribution of coins or goods to various groups. Typical examples would be processing Royalty either themselves, or through servants, casting coins to the populace as they enter Court or the same Royalty afterwards conferring mead upon a group of Guardsmen. Where does this practice come from? Is it something we have evolved ourselves, or does it have historical roots?

Rest assured, what we see in these examples is exactly historical practice. The giving of gifts in money or kind to the soldiers dates from tribal and pre-period times in most cultures. For example, the Romans (and later the Byzantines) formalised the institution under officials, called the *largitones, who gave out their largesse (often called a donative) at appropriate times, such as the ascension or anniversary of an Emperor. This money was very distinct from the annual distribution of wages (called the annonae) and of allowances (sitēresia). A particular early example of largesse is that the loot gained from the sacking of pagan temples was used by Constantine to ensure the loyalty of the army during the period where Christianity was made the sole and official religion by broadcasting it widely. So institutionalised was the practice that there was a special name for the 'day of an imperial largesse' – the dōreas basilikēs hēmera. Liutprand of Cremona records the activity of one such occasion where the distribution took three days.*

This distribution could be very sizeable. Tiberius II, in 578, gave 7,200 lb of gold, or 518,400 solidi, besides silver and silk. There was an inevitable trickle down effect as other persons than the Emperor started to hand out largesse. This prompted legislation to control the practice. "It shall not be permitted for a private individual to distribute a pure silk garment as largesse at any performance of the games. We also confirm by this law that, ordinary consuls excepted, absolutely no one else shall have the right of giving away a gift in gold, or a diptych in ivory. When public ceremonies are enacted, silver coin shall be used for gifts, and another material for diptychs. Nor is it permitted to expend a silver coin larger than that which is customarily formed when a pound of silver is divided into sixty pieces of coin. And We permit those who wish to give a smaller one to do so not only freely, but even honourably." Emperors Valentian II, Theodosius and Arcadius, Augusti, 25 July 384.

This law remained on the books (although sometimes largesse was banned) until it was superseded in 538. The new law said that "And so We better regulate the consular scattering of largesse to the people in these seven processions, just as the law of Marcian of Blessed Memory states (2). This law forbid entirely the exercise of munificence, but We amend it, acting at the suggestion of the individual who has the honour of holding the consulship. Now if the holder does not wish to scatter anything We do not compel him to do so, and if he wishes to restore the situation and honour the people with gifts of money We do not forbid him to do so. Nevertheless We command him not to scatter gold, whether small in form or – and more particularly – large, whether of medium size either struck or simply weighed, but to scatter silver only, just as We have commanded above. For to scatter gold is reserved for the emperor, since it is to him alone that the summit of fortune has given the capacity to despise gold. Silver, which is considered most precious directly after gold, is a suitable largesse for other consuls. There fore We command them to scatter largesse in what are called *miliarēsia and mēla and kaukia and tetragōnia and so on. For the smaller the objects that are scattered, the greater the number of recipients." This law continued in use for some time.*

Largesse continued through into our period in the only state wealthy enough to institutionalise it (and it seems that our SCA custom of casting coin derives from these Byzantine examples). However the coins used declined in value. A late thirteenth century example (after the stripping of wealth from the Empire by the treachery of the Fourth Crusade) talks of silver and copper *nomismata*

A Brief Note on Largesse

being thrown to the populace during a Palm Sunday procession. It is also interesting to note (for our purposes) that largesse did not come from public funds, but from private ones. It does appear that it became institutionalised that, as well as the bounty to the populace, officers of the Emperor were given a separate largesse (or donative) upon a Coronation.

These concepts were transferred poorly to the barbarian West through ambassadors, mercenaries and merchants who visited the civilised Byzantine Empire. I cannot find any repeated examples in the West of the main form of largesse used in the SCA despite it being lauded as one of the prime virtues of a knight. In most Western cases largesse became a matter of donation or charity to individual recipients or to the Church. However this was not always the case. Although Marc Bloch cites examples that note that largesse was the "lady or queen in whose light all virtues shine", he goes on to show how this became reduced to an almost potlatch mentality with many nobles (3). In a cited example in Limousin several knights competed in largesse. One had a plot of ground sown with silver coin. Another had meals cooked with wax candles and a third had thirty of his horses burnt alive.

This behaviour is not however universal, and was condemned by many. Machiavelli wrote: "So as a prince cannot practise the virtue of generosity in such a way that he is noted for it, except to his cost, he should be prudent nor mind being called a miser." A middle path was however preferred. John of Salisbury, who was well thought of in our period, wrote in 1159 that "Although prodigality is palpably at fault, I think there should be no place for avarice … If, however, one possesses wealth, there is nothing more glorious than the type of liberality which expresses itself in giving." This is the attitude I believe that we should look towards in our rulers.

Notes

1. Ynys Fawr at least.
2. Marcian, in 452, forbade largesse and instead commanded that the customary distributions be paid into a fund to maintain the aqueducts.
3. 'Potlach' is a North-Western American Indian term that describes how wealth is used in a society of abundance to gain prestige through excessive gift giving and the destruction of valuable property.

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By: Lady of Bree Bye of Caer Galen

A Little Bit of Love in the Middle Ages

By: Lady Eden Blacksmith

A Little Bit of Love in the Middle Ages
By Lady Eden Blacksmith

Sweet lover come, renew our lovemaking
Within the garden where the light birds sing,
Until the watcher sound the severing.
Ah God, ah God, the dawn! It comes how soon.
The Middle Ages Volume I

Love: the intangible element was a factor in the middle ages, however its definition by society was defined by the time period. Our forefathers and fore mothers loved well and long..and much poetry and literature is given to the many aspects of loving. Indeed, for many centuries - from the time of the Greeks through the seventeenth century - physicians regularly offered treatment for love-sickness, "the lovers maladye of heroes," which they regarded as both a physical and a mental affliction.

To better understand the supposed relationship between the sexes it is important that you know prior to 1174 women were "You are the devil's gateway...you are the first deserter of the divine law; you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of your desert- that is, death- even the Son of God had to die." Typical themes in medieval writings are: women have unbridled passions, inability to keep secrets, weakness for flattery, greed, extravagant dress, pride, duplicity, and shrewishness. Sex even within marriage is a sin, women are the source of sin and mortality due to Eve. Woman should be punished throughout her life for the failings of Eve. Only slightly tempered by the concept of courtly love.

In 1174, Andreas Capellanus, chaplain to Marie de France, gave the world; "The Art of Courtly Love". It is now believed that he was not trying to write a serious code of conduct; instead he was trying to have a bit of fun. Courtly love required adherence to rules elaborated in the songs of the troubadours between the 11th and the 13th centuries. A nobleman in love with a married woman of equally high or higher birth had to prove his devotion by heroic deeds and amorous writings. Once the lovers had exchanged pledges and consummated their passion, complete secrecy had to be maintained. Because most noble marriages of the time were little more than business contracts, courtly love was a form of sanctioned adultery. Capellanus said: ". . . a certain inborn suffering derived from the sight of and excessive meditation upon the beauty of the opposite sex, which causes each one to wish above all things the embraces of the other and by common desire to carry out all of love's precepts in the other's embrace." The concept of "pure love" which included strongly self-deprecating behavior and servitude by a man for a distant, unattainable woman was a driving force throughout the high period of medieval love literature. From 1100 to 1300 (most intensely in the quarter-centuries before and after 1200), the language of lady love prevailed in the courts of England and Europe. The concept that woman should be admired was vastly different from the misogynist writings that flourished at that time. The sin, guilt and impurities of women were being preached from every pulpit. This new position that a woman was to be worshiped and idolized gave women a new power and a new verison of enslavement. For if in this "game" of love the truth was learned then it was the women that was punished. Her virtue was a great conquest and her value would only last as long as she was prey. If she were to yield and their tryst discovered than she was seen as the weak, wanton creature that the Church said, and the man was viewed with the admiration that any victor would receive.

The Art of Courtly Love had very clear, but conflicting rules: A man who is vexed by too much passion usually does not love, yet A true lover is constantly and without intermission possessed by the thought of his beloved. And Love is always a stranger in the home of avarice (jealousy), yet Jealousy, and therefore love, are increased when one suspects his beloved. There are 31 rules listed in this game of love. It was devised in such a way that almost no man could win if called in to a "Court of Love". However, what was to be a game soon became a societal viewpoint. The role of women and the conceptions of love have been altered ever since.

Another publication can lay some claim to modifying the aspects of love: "Romance of the Rose" (Le Roman de la Rose), a long

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thirteenth-century French poem, extremely popular and influential in the Middle Ages, was written by two authors. The first part, 4,058 lines by Guillaume de Lorris, is a dream -vision allegory in which an aristocratic young man falls in love with a rosebud symbolizing a lady or her sexual favors. The Lover is aided by a personification called "Fair Welcome" but opposed by other personifications that symbolize the personal and social restraints standing against his advances Fear, Shame, Gossip ("Malebouche" in French; "Wikked Tongue" in a Middle English translation), and "Daunger," our word danger, which, personified as a churl wielding a club, here stands for instinctive female resistance to male sexual desire. The first part was never finished; it breaks off with the rose imprisoned in the castle of Jealousy with the Lover disconsolate on the outside. The poem was taken up by Jean de Meun, an academic at the University of Paris, who continued it for another 17,724 lines, which cover religion, philosophy, history, science, sex, love, marriage, and women. From its teachings women were told: There is also a proper way to weep, but every woman has the skill to weep properly wherever she may be. Even when no one has caused them any trouble or shame or annoyance, they still have tears at the ready: they all weep in whatever they like, and make a habit of it. And we learn that; In short, [men] are all deceitful traitors, ready to indulge their lusts with everyone, and we should deceive them in our turn and not set our hearts upon just one of them. It is a foolish woman who gives her heart in this way: she ought to have several lovers and arrange, if she can, to be so pleasing that she brings great suffering upon all of them. If she has no graces, let her acquire them and always behave more cruelly towards those who will strive all the harder to serve her in order to win her love, while exerting herself to welcome those who do not care about it.

Our ancestors loved a good love story as much as we do. And, no another love story satisfies the quota than that of Abelard and Heloise it contains; passion, forbidden love, forbidden sex, unwed-pregnancy, torture, imprisonment, longing, unrequited love,of resentment and castration. This is a summary of their story; Pierre Abelard (1079-1142) was by all accounts a brilliant scholar and theologian met Heloise (1101-1164) 22 years his junior and soon was smitten with her (Take thou this rose, O rose, Since love's own flower it is, And by that rose Thy lover captive is.. Abelard) and convinced her uncle Fulbert, a canon of the Cathedral to become her private teacher.

(We were united first in the dwelling that sheltered our love, and then in the hearts that burned with it. Under the pretext of study we spent our hours in the happiness of love, and learning held out to us the secret opportunities that our passion craved. Our speech was more of love than of the books which lay open before us; our kisses far outnumbered our reasoned words. The very sundering of our bodies served but to link our souls closer together; the plentitude of the love which was denied to us inflamed us more than ever. Abelard) Well the uncle found out, than Heloise found out she was pregnant, than Abelard married her, than the uncle found them and brought her back, than she had a boy named Astrolabe, than Abeland and Heloise wanted to have the marriage kept secret, than Abeland and Heloise ran off . Heloise was hid as a nun, the uncle showed up thought she was forced to take the veil and had Abelard castrated. (... for they cut off those parts of my body with which I had done that which was the cause of their sorrow.. Abelard) Than Abelard and Heloise both took holy orders. Their love, far from fading, intensified. Abelard founded a convent. He called it "Consoling Spirit." Later, Heloise became the Abbess. Than Heloise wrote him long love letters and love poems and they were published in the Historia Calamitatum so that all could read them.. These missive of love and longing lasted for years with him saying stop we must not and her writing more , and him writing her to say sweet words and her writing more, than him saying no we must not. (Peace, O my stricken lute! Thy strings are sleeping.., would that my heart could still, Its bitter weeping! Abelard) Upon his death Heloise had Abelard's body brought to the Paraclete, where she was later buried beside him. They lie together still. This medieval soap opera kept upper nobility on the edge of their seats for years. Love in the medieval world was as complex as it is today. Yet, perhaps it was even more so because in a short span of time love was defined by a new set of rules in a game we are still playing.

Viewing Medieval Culture Through Literature

By: Ban Fili Cailte Caitchairn, OL

Viewing Medieval Culture Through Literature

by Ban-Fili Cailte Caitchairn, O.L.

German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche said "That which does not kill us makes us stronger." He also said "There are no facts, only interpretations." History is the story of conflict and reaction. The conflict cannot be predicted, and therefore preparation is not possible. Conflict can only be met by reaction, and the reaction forms the outcome. Those who survive the conflict, by whatever means, are the winners, and the winners will write their story.

Literature such as chronicles, sagas and poetry are all ways for a culture to tell their story. There is a personal depth that, although not missing from other art forms, allows an ease of movement through time and place. An educated man may read these stories for himself. An illiterate man can hear the story as it is told by a storyteller or traveler, who may himself have learned it by rote from another. Even today, people will hear what is going on in another country before all of those same people see the same picture of it. The old axiom is true, good news spreads fast and bad news faster.

Words travel with an ease that physical items cannot. For example, if a person in medieval Sicily wanted to know what the gem-encrusted Insular Gospels looked like, the books could not come to his town as a traveling exhibit. He would have to take a very long trip indeed to visit Iona or Jarrow. The Pictish carved stones were not coming to a location near him at any future time so that he could see what they looked like. If someone were to write a description, then the curious Sicilian might have some notion of how the stones looked. If someone wrote an extremely detailed description of the stones, glorifying each curve and texture in minute detail, he would have an even better idea of their appearance.

Poetry and sagas present a culture in an accessible and exciting way. They capture not only the events of the time, but the climate as well. Who is the ruler? Is the story being told by a scholar or member of the court, by a Catholic or pagan? How is honor seen by the Anglo Saxons that differs from the Irish? Is the young adventurer an idiot or a hero? Stories relating how a culture presents its values, hopes and traditions are far more telling than carvings or metalsmithing.

A comparison of Beowulf and the Prose Edda shows a number of similarities. Kingly gifts of golden rings, rewards for devotion, bravery and honor are prevalent in both. This is a time of conquest and bravery, when Christianity is waging its own battle against the pagan ways, not unlike Beowulf and Grendel. The tone of Beowulf, with its invocations to God the Father to strengthen the hero in his fight against the mythical monsters, speaks of this battle between Christianity and paganism. In the end, Beowulf wins his fight, as does Christianity. A sculpture or picture cannot convey honor, bravery or virtue the way that words can.

There is a flaw in the use of literature to relate culture and history. Dates are not often mentioned, at least not in story, poem or song. The reader is often left with lineages, "centuries ago", and the sci-fi "distant galaxy far, far away" concept to conjecture time and place. The VinlandSagas tell the story of the Vikings in America. However, depending on which story is read, the tale may only be half-told. The Graenlandiging Saga is rich with detail, creating a palpable, physical world. Eirik's Saga is sparse, relating events with little drama. The conflicts are the same, but the interpretations differ. Certainly the more elaborate tale would be more popular around the feast hall, but the simpler one may be the better accounting of events, even with vague references to time and place.

There is a carving on the Ruthwell Cross that some interpret as Mary and Elizabeth in a scene of the Visitation. However, the lettering around the figures shows the names Mary and Martha. The explanation is that it is probably Mary and Elizabeth, and the legend refers to the feast day of St. Martha. Unfortunately, the carver did not title that (or any other) section, but left it to the common knowledge to know what it said. This would be word of mouth from the practitioners. Once again, the spoken word appears more reliable than the object.

The representation of Christ and the Evangelists varies greatly in the Insular Gospels. Let us suppose that a researcher

wishes to use the illuminations in several of the Gospels to define the clothing of Ireland, England and Scotland in that era. The Lindesfarne Gospels have reasonably realistic figures wearing plain robes trimmed at the edges. The Book of Kells shows more stylistic figures, with great, looming eyes fixed, no doubt, on a Heaven far away. They wear heavily patterned and decorated robes with wide borders. The Book of Chad shows an evangelist so swathed in stylistic folds of a plain robe that the modern mind is reminded of the Ezrine Tire Man. Which is the correct representation of the Insular way of dress? The answer is that perhaps it is not even Insular at all. It is an interpretation of how Hebrews would dress, and therefore not indicative of clothing of the area. Once again, interpretation comes into play.

This begs another look at interpretation rather than facts. Paint chips, rock crumbles, silk fades. How is the researcher to know if the item looks as it was meant to look centuries ago. On a personal note, I have listened to incredibly involved conversations regarding whether pink was on the medieval painters' or dyers' palette. The dress in an illumination appears to be pink, but is that a result of a particular red pigment that has faded, or was the painting of a faded red dress, or did the dyer indeed achieve pink and the illuminator represent it correctly? Three interpretations exist but no facts. The answer in this complicated question in the end was yes to all three options.

This leads to an interesting approach we have not addressed and that is immersion. There are a great number of groups who research various eras in history and try to recreate what was made at that time. Some recreate the Battle of Hastings, others the Civil War, and others Viking homesteads. A number of books survive on the way things were made in past centuries. A modern painter can use the same formula to make paint and gesso found in The Craftsman's Handbook: "Il Libro dell' Arte" by Cennino d'Andrea Cennini, circa 1370 to 1440, and experience creation in another century first hand. Yet in the end, we are left with the interpretation of what the color should look like, based upon primary sources that may or may not have faded over time.

Literature, sagas, stories and poems are written down and told throughout the centuries. They are not stagnant. But like the paint on paper, the embroidery on the cloth and the carvings on the rocks, they do not remain unchanged. The popularity of the tale of one battle may lead to even more embellishment on the part of the writer. It is only human nature to paint the good benefactor in a golden light and the evil king as a monster. Enhancing the bravery of a victorious army may make other invaders think twice before engaging them in battle. Survival is the ultimate, at any cost.

In the end, no form of interpretation or investigation is truly accurate of the way a culture lived. We are left with a giant puzzle with some very large pieces, some of them missing. It is admirable that a person might put all of his faith and trust in the piece of the puzzle he has found and sees it as the Holy Grail of that culture. It is more realistic to observe that 'grail' as a piece of a large place setting that is only complete when many complex pieces are put into proper place and perspective.

History is not merely a pile of dusty, dry bones. Neither is it a horde of jewelry in perfect condition. It is not a fragment of tile nor a poem about Pangur Ban penned in the margin of a manuscript. It is how the people who made these things adapted to change and whether or not they survived or disappeared into the dust. It is their story. The investigation of conflict and reaction provided by the writer experiencing these events, tempered with the realization on the part of the reader that the story may contain a large dose of interpretation as well as fact, can lead to a more balanced view of culture and history.

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Medieval Religious Women

By: Lord James Northfolke

Medieval Religious Women: Their Use of Feminine Imagery and Their Sense of Self

by Lord James Northfolke

By the time of the Middle Ages, the story of religious women had been a long narrative of fear for men. Beginning with Eve in the creation story in the Bible, women's voices were disturbing, linked to the fear of female flesh and desire. According to Medieval theologians, women had made their own "silent" destiny by sinning through the first human speech—"the dialogue concerning the [fruit]...led to the expulsion from Eden and set humankind on the path of history." Woman was sinful as she snatched language from man and used it in invading public and domestic space. She was also quite dangerous in that her charismatic and prophetic speech provided claims to relations with the sacred.

Here is a discussion of this claim of religious women to that of the sacred, particularly how they viewed femininity, themselves, and what entailed their sense of self. Some religious women were writers, especially in religious mysticism. This sort of genre incorporates the women's religious visions dealing with questions of the Church, God as Father, and, chiefly and most importantly, their relationships to Christ as his brides.

Caroline Walker Bynum states that during the period from the latter twelfth century to the early fourteenth century, women's opportunities for participation in specialized religious roles increased significantly. The piety of these women began to take on characteristics distinct, and noted, of their male counterparts. She holds that for the first time in the history of the Church there was a sort of women's movement that speaks to specifically female influence on the development of piety.

Why was this so? Penelope Johnson asserts that while most medieval women "accepted their role in patriarchal society, religious women still often challenged the authority of their male superiors." She follows that because of the high birth (nobility) of some nuns, a climate of assertive behavior seemed natural. Nuns were collectively empowered by their communal privileges as they were no longer individual females defined by the men in their life (fathers, husbands, etc.), but, rather, assimilated into a new "corporate persona." These women also had ties to the outside world. They were involved in caring for the poor, keeping the nobility in line, and leading legal challenges to protect their rights and property.

Johnson continues that monks and nuns during the Middle Ages were, essentially, equal. During this time, when men and women shared the monastic institution, participants and structure flourished. There was a common vision of equality in the order of grace where there was "neither male nor female" (Gal. 3:28) and a freedom from the biological and societal disabilities women faced in the order of nature.

Johnson shows that, in three ways, female and male experience were similar: in spiritual life, especially with monastic vows; hierarchy, with notions of a superior; and with economics.

In comparing the ability of women and men in holding to their monastic vows, Johnson asserts that women were more guilty in owning property, equal in keeping chaste, and men having a harder time being obedient. Because of this, she concludes that being male or female had no bearing on keeping vows, and both were equal.

In the hierarchical realm, the bulk of authority rested in the superior of the monastic community. In this way both the abbess and abbot was a person of importance in and out of the monastery. Nunneries provided a means by which women could exercise administrative and legal abilities like those of their male counterparts. Finally, economically, nunneries behaved no differently than the male monasteries in economics that included activities of directing interaction with money borrowers and lenders as well as commerce through taxation on merchants' merchandise. However, nunneries had the extra expense of housing male clerics as the nuns were not allowed to administer the sacraments. Thus, in these instances, it can be seen that being equal in "profession" was not, on the whole, necessarily difficult.

There were, basically, three substantive differences between religious men and women: monks could be ordained to the priesthood while nuns could not; women were more tightly cloistered than men; and convents were generally poorer than monasteries. These were

important as they are what, essentially, kept men and women separate. This separatism fosters not only a sense of the "other," but also a sense of self.

In her Jesus as Mother, Caroline Bynum argues that during the Middle Ages the notions of being female (biologically) and the ideas of femininity (for males) are not the same. Feminine religious images should not be taken literally. The use of feminine imagery by the Cistercians show a conception of Jesus as mother that reveals not an attitude toward women, but a sense of a need and obligation to nurture other men and to achieve intimate dependence on God. The notion of feminine and self as understood by female mystics, of course, differ. These women are inclined to a contact and unity with God and Christ's humanity, especially through the Eucharist and its emphasis on Christ's blood.

Bynum's book shows women's attitudes (already an achievement) and attitudes placed upon them to be probably more complex than that of simple patriarchal authority. She demonstrates that women mystics could use the route of mysticism as an alternative to the authority of office. God is accessible to women and they are complimentary to the Church. It is interesting that while men uphold feminine characteristics, which are in personalities of men as well as women; they still see female as subordinate. Bynum would agree with Johnson that the cloister was an alternative. Bynum would go further to say that mysticism was an alternative to priesthood.

These women discussed here not only view themselves within the hierarchical realm of the Church, they also manage the system to their benefit. For them notions of femininity, though subordinate in the world, are equal to masculinity in spirituality. This system works because they are able to see and show God and Christ as having these feminine attributes. With this equality the mystics strive for a relationship of compromise with men, both striving for reconciliation with God. Moving from the images of spiritual/male and physical/female (and the negative connotations therein), these women are beginning to realize the physical with Christ's humanity and, conversely, Christ's feminine attributes of nurturing, caring, and the like. With this there is also the emphasis on Christ's blood and his feeding of the soul. Bynum would point out that women writers did not use this image of God/Christ as mother in a way that associated it with their own leadership roles or with leadership in general. They simply projected themselves into the role of child of the Mother. Men, on the other hand, sometimes paralleled the Motherhood and their own.

While this is not to say that women were not still viewed as subordinate and being the "weaker" sex, it appears that there is a sort of movement in that women are more clearly defining themselves and their relation to the world around them. They began, quite cleverly, to find ways in which to gain power or status in a male dominated hierarchical Church. They began to show to themselves and men the moral importance of women, the spiritual equality of the sexes, and God's feminine side.

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- Lady Isabeau de Bernac
- Lady Samantha Kennington
- Madame Adelaisa Bernois
- Lady Abigail MacNaught
- Lady Isabella Francesco
- LadyViola di Luca

Captains of the Guard

- Don Antoine de Vallier
- Master Thorsinn Vandringsmann

Guard

- Lord Connal Mac an Druaidh
- Lord Maxamillian Kern
- Lord Seamus McRay
- Lady Veronica Francesco

Court Herald

- *Accepting Applications—see Their Excellencies*

Champions

- Heavy: THLord Sixtus Goetz
- Rapier: Don Seamus McRay
- Archery: Bernard
- Shield of Chivalry: Lady Veronica Francesco

Largesse Coordinator

- Madame Adelaisa Bernois

Photo by Lady Bree Pye

Who Are We?

The Barony of Dragonsspine is a local chapter of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA), within the Kingdom of the Outlands.

The SCA is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to learning more about the Middle Ages through reenactment. There are SCA chapters worldwide and they hold regular feasts, tournaments, balls and battles.

The Outlands includes New Mexico, Colorado and parts of Texas and Wyoming.

Dragonsspine includes El Paso County, Colorado—centered on Colorado Springs, CO.

Wherever you are, we're a friendly group of people, so why not visit us all?

We're on the Web at:

www.dragonsspine.outlands.org

We're also on Facebook as

Barony of Dragonsspine

Join our Yahoo group here

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